



OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE



Office of the Vice President

Tom Poor Bear
Post Office Box 2070
Pine Ridge, South Dakota 57770
605.867.8411 Office—605.867.1449 Fax
TomPB@oglala.org
www.oglalalakotanation.org



December 6, 2012

Native American Telecommunications Pine Ridge

PO Box#669

Pine Ridge, South Dakota 57770

(605) 867-5771/5600

David Pourier
Administrative Asst.

Helena A. Breuninger
Executive Secretary

Tamara Trueblood
Cultural Liaison

RE: Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern,

The Oglala Sioux Tribe Office of the Vice President endorses the NAT project that is set to provide a tribally owned advanced, high-speed wireless broadband service provider that is partnered with high technology companies to spur economic and business development on the Pine Ridge reservation, & also the "Call to Action" letter. (See attached)

This Internet library & Technology center could provide Tribal Members with Internet access, computer training, and educational development, enabling tribal members to pursue their dreams and become self sufficient.

Thank You,

Tom Poor Bear, OST Vice President

THIS IS A CALL FOR ACTION!

You can do your part by reading these details about what's been happening "behind the scenes" on the Pine Ridge Reservation, a "third world" nation right here within the United States of America. Finally, the Oglala Sioux Tribe has said, "Enough is Enough!"

BETTER get a fresh cup of coffee...there is a lot here for you to read, but it's well worth your time...and especially worthwhile for the Oglala Sioux Tribe, which is making an honest attempt to become self-sufficient, but fighting obstacles.

This is a ***Call for Action*** to end the cycle of crime, poverty, illnesses and racism on the Pine Ridge Reservation. To help you understand the background and the solution, let's take this by the number:

1. With all of the information and documented evidence of crime, poverty, illnesses, and racism on the Pine Ridge reservation (see sources at end of this letter), why are these first "Americans" still suffering? How can these problems persist year over year without resolution? And what can be done to finally make things right?

The answer to these difficult questions does not rest on the dependency of others, but on the self-sufficiency and sovereignty of the Tribe. Rather than provide more hand-outs that further exasperate the problems associated with a government-created dependent sovereign nation, the answer lies in developing an environment that will lead to self-sufficiency through establishment of economic opportunities for the Tribe and non-tribal entities on the Pine Ridge reservation.

The Pine Ridge reservation, like other isolated rural areas, are potential havens for wind energy, agriculture, farming, and other natural resources, along with technology centers. Each of these opportunities take advantage of the natural resources of tribal lands (*e.g.*, geographic dependent resources) or take advantage of opportunities, such as call centers, tele-medicine, and technology centers (*e.g.*, geographic agnostic opportunities).

While there are barriers to doing business on reservations, there are many rewards and these barriers can be overcome through perseverance, willing partners, and government intervention, if necessary, which, together, is the formula for ending the cycle of crime, poverty, illnesses, and racism on the Pine Ridge and other Indian reservations.

2. The Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge reservation has taken steps to implement a formula to become more self-sufficient and less dependent upon

others by establishing a technology-based society that enables tribal members to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century.

The cornerstone of this new technology-based society is the planned Internet Library and Technology Center where tribal members can obtain Internet access, computer training, and educational development, enabling tribal members to pursue their dreams and become self-sufficient.

3. To achieve its vision of self-sufficiency and economic development, the Tribe has established a tribally-owned advanced, high-speed wireless broadband service provider and has partnered with high technology companies to spur economic and business development on the reservation.

The Internet Library and Technology Center, along with the Tribe's high technology partners, are using the advanced, high-speed wireless broadband service to transform the Pine Ridge reservation from a dependent society to a self-sufficient tribal nation.

Soon, the village of Pine Ridge will become a high-speed broadband hotspot providing all residents and visitors with Internet access to conduct business and access required services and information. The Oglala Sioux Tribe has also partnered with one of the largest technology and conferencing companies in the world to establish a high-technology business on the reservation – a first of its kind!!

The Oglala Sioux Tribe has also partnered with a telecommunications development company with years of experience working with other Indian Tribes on the business development and the establishment of an Internet Library and Technology Center to provide high-speed Internet service and computer and educational training to Tribal members.

4. There has been strong opposition to the Tribe's efforts to develop its own resources and pursue economic development opportunities. Why? Because outside interests have long taken advantage of the Tribe's inability to be self-sufficient and control their own economic affairs on reservations.

Now, the Oglala Sioux Tribe has said, "Enough is Enough." It is time--with the federal government's assistance--to be self-sufficient and control economic affairs on the Pine Ridge reservation.

To begin, the Oglala Sioux Tribe recently informed entities operating on the Pine Ridge reservation that they must consult with the Tribe and meet all tribal requirements for operation on the reservation and use of tribal land. While this should have been the requirement all along, it has not been followed or enforced, and is a prime example of outside interests taking advantage of the Tribe and its people.

5. Do you think Casinos were the Tribes' idea? No! Do you think past actions in taking the Tribes' valuable land rights benefit them today? No! Do you think locating alcohol and tobacco stores off-reservation land, but serving only tribal members, benefit tribal members? No!

I say "Enough is Enough" and make this call for action so that the injustices of the past do not need to continue to haunt the Tribes today.

6. Some of the largest and wealthiest companies in the world are refusing to pay for services provided by the Oglala Sioux Tribe, one of the poorest tribes in the United States.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe has taken the initiative to establish a tribally-owned telecommunications company and is providing high speed broadband service on the Pine Ridge reservation, much like numerous rural telephone companies throughout the United States. However, some of the nation's largest telecommunications carriers – Sprint and CenturyLink --are refusing to pay for services provided by the Tribe, but are paying for these very same services provided by the rural telephone companies located off-reservation.

Other carriers, however, are paying for services provided by the Tribe and should be applauded for doing what is right, while other companies, like Sprint and CenturyLink, should be summoned to the court of public opinion and held accountable for their actions.

WE MAKE THIS CALL FOR ACTION TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF REGULATORS, LEGISLATORS, POLITICIANS, AND THE PUBLIC – TO SUPPORT THE OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE TO END THE CYCLE OF CRIME, POVERTY, ILLNESSES, AND RACISM ON THE PINE RIDGE RESERVATION.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe's new economic development initiatives hold much promise for jobs, economic development, and affordable access to basic and advanced telecommunications services, including educational development through the Internet Library and Technology Center. But if companies are able to avoid their legal and moral obligations, then history will once again tell the story of oppression and the failure of others to take action.

To Sprint and CenturyLink, we say let's work together to help the people of the Pine Ridge reservation and together we can be part of the solution to end crime, poverty, illnesses, and racism.

For all of the people of the Oglala Sioux Tribe and other Indian Nations suffering from the injustices of the past, let's create some noise so that this ***Call for Action*** does not fall on deaf ears. The only way this is going to happen is if: (i) YOU take action and send this or your own personal request to legislators, regulators, and politicians; (ii) the media takes an interest and visits the Pine Ridge reservation to witness first hand the problems on the reservation and what the Oglala Sioux Tribe,

itself, is doing to solve these age-old problems; and (iii) those in power – politicians, legislators, and regulators – take action to address the problems on Indian reservations.

Sources worth checking:

Amidst the crime, poverty, illnesses, and racism on Pine Ridge reservation within the United States of America, there remains hope for better times. The problems facing the Oglala Sioux Tribe on the Pine Ridge reservation in the United States are well chronicled by:

- By numerous books, including “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West,” “On the Rez”, and “Pine Ridge Reservation (Images of America: South Dakota);”
- By Aaron Huey: America's native prisoners of war (http://www.ted.com/talks/aaron_huey.html);
- By Claire O'Neill in partnership with National Geographic (<http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2012/08/13/158560031/slideshow-the-light-and-dark-on-pine-ridge-reservation>);
- By Alexandra Fuller, National Geographic (<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/08/pine-ridge/fuller-text>);
- By Charles Michael Ray in the National Public Radio Story “Pine Ridge Reservation Deaths To Be Reinvestigated;”
- By ABC 20/20 report on the Pine Ridge reservation (<http://abc.go.com/watch/2020/SH559026/VD55148316/2020-1014-children-of-the-plains>);
- By a compilation of Pine Ridge stories. (<http://www.squidoo.com/pine-ridge-reservation-or-prison-camp>); and
- By YouTube Videos (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqhMAoOcYi8>)
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vniddwLGsk>)
(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGC63iJE958>)
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_110835&feature=iv&src_vid=DDTHDYb1CVM&v=ELWllQNS1cM)